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Andersen Urges Federal Impetus in Civil Defense

BY ROBERT E. LEE
Of The News-Tribune
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Gov. Elmer Andersen told President Kennedy Tuesday the people of Minnesota are more interested in federal impetus in civil defense affairs than in federal funds.

Andersen was one of six governors who discussed civil defense with the President and other federal officials at the White House. Before meeting Kennedy they were briefed on security and intelligence matters by Charles Bohlen, special assistant to the secretary of state for Communist affairs, and Robert Armory, deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

After the meeting with the President, Andersen told The News-Tribune Washington Bureau

Minnesota has "a strong civil defense program relative to other states."

He said he and Kennedy the state favors retention of the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization (OCDM) as a separate agency. Others have suggested that its functions be taken over by the Defense Department.

Andersen said the best thing the federal government can do is "provide impetus through such tangible things as construction of fallout shelters in military installations and in buildings in the District of Columbia."

This would serve as an incentive for the states, he said. "The people themselves ought to put more into civil defense, not the federal government," the governor said.

The governor said Kennedy ap-

peared extremely concerned about the cost of a large scale civil defense program and the importance of spending whatever funds are made available in the wisest manner possible.

Gov. Nelson Rockefeller of New York, chairman of a civil defense committee of the governors conference, acted as spokesman for the group when they emerged from the meetings and told newsmen the administration will have a long-range civil defense program ready to submit to Congress in about a month. The governors' committee will meet again at that time.

Meanwhile, said Rockefeller, the governors are urging Congress to approve the present budget of \$105 million for fiscal 1962.

for the OCDM and 25 million more for construction of fallout shelters in federal buildings.

Rockefeller emphasized, and the other governors more or less agreed, that the chief executives of all states would back the President's program when it is drafted.

"The American people want the President, as commander in chief, to state the national policy," the New Yorker said. "Then the governors can implement the policy in line with the states' responsibility for protection of the citizens."

Rockefeller said he and other governors stressed in their conference with the President the role of strong civil defense as a deterrent to enemy attack. The emphasis in civil defense should be on fallout shelters, Rockefeller said.

Gov. Ernest Hollings of South Carolina interjected that Rockefeller had Kennedy "literally eating out of his hand" at one point during the conference. Rockefeller had brought along some "fallout biscuits" which New York's civil defense authorities had developed and offered some to Kennedy. "It only costs 35 cents for 20 of them, a day's supply, and they'll last 10 years when packed in tin," Rockefeller explained.